

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
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FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
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INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 4135

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: TAGS: KU, EG, LY
SUBJECT: KUWAIT MEDIATION OF LIBYA-EGYPT CONFLICT

1. KUWAITI FON MIN SABAH AL-AHMAD WENT TO CAIRO JULY 24,
REPORTEDLY WILL SEE PRES. SADAT IN ALEXANDRIA JULY 25,
AND THEN WILL PROCEED TO TRIPOLI, IN AN ATTEMPT TO
CONTRIBUTE TO CURRENT EFFORTS TO MEDIATE EGYPTIAN-LIBYAN
DIFFERENCES. BEFORE FON MIN'S DEPARTUE, ACTING MINISTER
FOR CABINET AFFAIRS JASSIM MARZOUK TOLD THE PRESS THAT THE
DECISION TO SEND THE FON MIN ON THIS MISSION WAS MADE IN
JULY 24 CABINET MEETING AND THAT THE CABINET WAS
CONCERNED OVER THE CONFLICT'S EFFECTS ON ARAB SOLIDARITY
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AND THE "HUMAN AND MATERIAL POTENTIAL" OF THE
ANTAGONISTS.

2. ALL KUWAIT NEWSPAPER EDITORIALS PRAISE THE GOK MOVE.
SOME COMPARE THE EGYPTIAN-LIBYAN CONFLICT UNFAVORABLY
WITH THE CURRENT PEACEFUL PROCESS BY WHICH KUWAIT AND
IRAQ ARE NORMALIZING BORDER DIFFERENCES. OTHERS

COMPLAIN THAT MEDIATION SHOULD HAVE BEEN USED BEFORE
CONFLICT STARTED. ONE EDITORIAL SEES THE CONFLICT AS
A FACET OF THE GLOBAL US-SOVIET CONFRONTATION.

3. COMMENT: THE GOK SENT ITS FON MIN TO PARTICIPATE
IN MEDIATION FOR SEVERAL REASONS, ONLY ONE OF WHICH IS
PUBLIC AND OBVIOUS. FIRST, IT IS OBVIOUS THAT KUWAIT,
AS MUCH AS ANY OF THE ARAB COUNTRIES, HAS AN INTERESTED
IN ARAB SOLIDARITY -- IT IS UNCOMFORTABLE WITH MAJOR
SPLITS IN THE ARAB WORLD WHICH DETRACT ATTENTION FROM
THE UNIFYING ANTI-ISRAELI ISSUE AND WHICH COULD FORCE
IT TO TAKE SIDES AND THUS INVITE ANTAGONISM TOWARD
KUWAIT ON INTRA-ARAB ISSUES. ALSO, THERE IS THE UGLY
PRECEDENT INHERENT IN THE EGYPTIAN-LIBYAN
CONFLICT OF INTERFERENCE BY A "BIG" COUNTRY (EGYPT)
AGAINST A "LITTLE" ONE (LIBYA), WHICH THE GOK MAY WELL
SEE AS APPLICABLE TO THE RELATIONSHIP WITH ITS OWN
"BIG" NEIGHBORS, PARTICULARLY IRAQ. THUS, IT
HAS AN INTEREST IN SETTING A COUNTER-PRECEDENT FOR
QUICK INTERVENTION BY THIRD PARTIES IN THE
INTERESTS OF PEACE IN THIS CASE. MOREOVER, THE LIBYAN
UNDERDOG IN THIS AFFAIR IS WIDELY ADMIRER BY
PALESTINIAN LEADERS AND PROVIDES SUBSTANTIAL BENEFITS
TO THE PALESTINIAN MOVEMENT. THUS, KUWAIT WOULD NOT
WISH TO DISREGARD PALESTINIAN CONCERNS BY SITTING ON
ITS HANDS WHILE THE EGYPTIANS -- NOT CURRENT FAVORITES
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OF THE PLO LEADERSHIP, NOT TO MENTION RADICAL GROUPS--
THREATEN LIBYA.
MAESTRONE

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